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35. Hints to Correspondents.—The season for herborizing has now fairly commenced, when the lover of plants will seize every opportunity to revisit his favorites, and study their habits. This seems a fitting occasion to remind him, that classification, though highly important, is only one branch of Natural History, and that far more may be learned of every species than the meager description proper to the Manual. The ideal local Flora should contain a full account of all the traits and habits of the vegetable world within its limits. There are many facts not to be gathered or but very imperfectly from the fullest herbaria,—facts which no doubt have, many of them, been noticed and stored up, in a scattered way, in the minds of individual observers, but which, being unrecorded, are lost, to the great detriment of science. We look forward to the time when New York shall possess a tolerably complete local Flora, and, with this view, wish to suggest some points, which it is desirable to have reported. First, there is the period of the successive changes in the plant from the opening of the buds and flowers to the fall of the seed and leaves, or decay of the whole plant; and, what is of more consequence than the month or the day, the relative time in comparison with others, particularly of the same genus or orders, and the variations in this respect, in different seasons or localities. We want much fuller information than we have yet about the earlier leaves of plants, and the tendencies of some to drop, and of others to keep their leaves. Secondly, it is necessary to note the geological character of the soil and situation, and whether it be moist or dry, and its exposure. Likewise, what plants are associated together, or seek the shelter, or society of others. Next, the conformation of the flower in reference to its fertilization, and whether the male or female organs are the first to mature; what insects visit or feed on the plants, — and in this let us hope that the votaries of the sister science of Entomology will aid us. Then there are the interesting subjects of the economy of the roots and rootstocks, of the buds, and of the seeds. All monstrosities are worthy of careful consideration, not only as throwing light on general morphology, but on the history of the plant itself. For every species has had a long history, and it is only by the most minute study, with all the concentrated lights of science, that we can hope to get some insight into it. This to many is the chief attraction of the subject, and we must ever, with Colden, the earliest botanist of the State, make it the object and guide of our studies, "*rerum cognoscere causas*." It should be remembered that farmers and men whose lives are passed in handling plants, have often made interesting observations, and their sympathy may be enlisted to preserve some rare situation.

We see that very much remains to be accomplished, and that those who are disposed to assist, can never want for subject matter. Every one with eyes for vegetable life might become a contributor, and would be gladly welcomed.

36. *Zanthorhiza*, *Zanthoxylum*.—These barbarous names are credited, the former to Humphrey Marshall of Pennsylvania, the latter to Governor Colden of New York. It would be hard to say whether they have not received more obloquy than honor from being remem-

bered in this connection; we have, therefore, a patriotic as well as a literary interest in having the proper correction made. The English Z is never an equivalent for the Greek X, and the inconsistency of putting a Z in the beginning and an X in the latter part of *Zanthoxylum* to represent the same Greek letter makes the confusion worse. All other botanical names beginning with X in Greek, are spelled with X, quite a number commencing with this very syllable *Xantho*.

We are aware that there is a canon against changing the initial letter of an established scientific name, but we consider this case a fair exception. Dr. Gray says, in a note we feel at liberty to quote, "As to *Zanthoxylum*, Colden wrote it so, Linnæus adopted it, and most have just followed. But there is no good reason for such orthography and it should have been corrected. *Zanthorhiza* is worse, because, I see, Marshall made it *Xanthorhiza*, so you have double reason. I have made them uniform but wholly unclassical. Bentham and Hooker have followed the original spelling in each case, and spelled one with a Z, the other with an X."—Lindley and the English Botanists generally seem to prefer the X, but on the continent Z prevails. We have always supposed, that Colden wrote "*Zanthoxylum*," but find in his manuscript, in the possession of Dr. Torrey, that he first describes the plant as a new genus, without giving it a name, and has afterwards inserted, "*Zanthoxylum*, Catesby."

The spelling of *Zanthorhiza* reminds us of another point in which inaccuracy is frequent. The word is composed of two elements, *Xantho*, and *rhiza*; now it is an invariable rule in Greek compounds that when the first part ends in a vowel, and the second commences with an r, the r must be doubled; and yet we find in authors such inconsistencies as *Corallorrhiza*, *polyrrhiza*.

We submit, therefore, that the correct spelling of the names in question is, *Xanthorrhiza*, *Xanthoxylum*.

37. *Polanisia graveolens*, Raf.—I have found in considerable quantity in rough clefts of the bank above the beach at Long Branch, N. J.

I. H. HALL.

38. *Argemone Mexicana*, L.—Yorkville on First Avenue.—Réseña odorata, L. 23d St. and 4th Av.

M. RUGER.

39. Correction.—Local Herbarium at Dr. T. F. Allen's, 3 E. 33d St., instead of 33 E. 33d St.

40. Flowering of the *Darlingtonia*.—Dr. Torrey kindly gave me, early last winter, one of the several specimens of *Darlingtonia*, which he received from a correspondent in California. An empty Aquarium tank was converted into a small conservatory for it, and it was planted in a mixture of swamp mud and sphagnum, the top of the tank being covered with a glass plate. The plant was kept in a cold room, where the moss was slightly frozen several times during the winter. The plant flowered early in April, and the specimen was placed in the hands of Dr. Torrey, to allow him to confirm his original observations, made upon dry materials, and he will probably add what may be necessary to complete the history of this interesting plant

G. T.